

Watching - in - Wonder

GROWING IN FAITH DURING
YOUR BABY'S FIRST YEAR

*A Devotional
Journal*

CATHERINE CLAIRE LARSON

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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Watching in Wonder

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Take an inventory of wonders as you get to know the sweet bundle in your arms and praise God for it all, from that perfect dimple to those tiny feet. Describe your sweet little one—so new to you—and take a few minutes to thank God for this precious gift.

What do you always want to remember about your little one's birth day?



Introducing your new one to others is one of the great joys of the first few weeks of your baby's life. Write about some precious introductions of Baby to friends and family.

This week, the verses in 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 remind us that to pass on the comfort we've received or the lessons we've learned is a blessing. What is a truth God has helped you understand that you look forward to sharing at the right time with your son or daughter?



Calling to mind God's past wonderful works is a way to bolster faith in the present moment. Where have you seen God's marvels in your life so far? Meditate on these things and on His wonders recorded in the Word. These give us hope during the hard days.

Psalm 139:14 says that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." How can you already see this to be true in your newborn?



What moments or little milestones have brought you joy in the last few weeks with your little one? Have you given Baby a first bath or held him while he slept nuzzled on your chest? Record one of these sweet joys here.

Read Matthew 25:21. How would you describe "the joy of your Lord"? How can this future hope impact you today?



Monthly Memories and Milestones

Our baby's full name:

How we chose that name:

Baby's Birthdate

Date:

Time:

Place:

Newborn Stats

Length:

Weight:

Eye Color:

Hair Color:



Labor and Delivery

It all started when . . .

I knew I was in labor when . . .

I was really nervous about . . .

I was really excited about . . .

The special people in the room were . . .

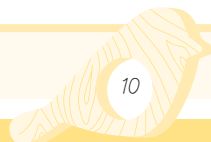


What Sabbath day habits can you develop that will eventually make life sweeter for your little one?

Speaking of rest, how does your baby like to sleep these days? In your arms, swaddled, in the car, in a baby carrier? Describe it here.

What comfort does it give you knowing that you don't have to perform to earn God's love?

Your life with Baby is composed of many ordinary moments that when strung together make an extraordinary garland of love. What ordinary moments with your little one do you want to remember from this week?



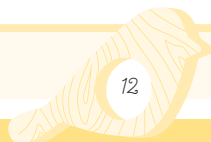
What strong people in your personal life do you want your baby to know about one day? Is there a grandparent or a mentor who epitomized strength exercised with goodness? Did that strength give you a feeling of safety and security?

Babies, just like us, can become anxious. Do you have any favorite lullabies, songs, or hymns you like to sing to calm or soothe Baby?



The softness of the image of wings of refuge reminds me of the softness of a mother's arms or a cozy receiving blanket. Where does your baby seem most comfortable and relaxed? What is soothing him or her these days?

A refuge can also be a place of retreat where we find God. Has there been a particular place that has been meaningful to you that you would like to tell your future grown son or daughter about one day?



Monthly Memories and Milestones

During Baby's first eight weeks, our little one met some special people, including . . .

The first time we took Baby somewhere was to go to . . .

My favorite thing to dress Baby in is . . .



One adjustment we've had to make since Baby arrived was . . .

Other moments or milestones from this month:



Read Revelation 4:11. Isaiah's response to God's holiness was to offer himself in service to God, saying, "Here am I! Send me." (6:8). How is the Spirit calling you today to respond to the holy, holy, holy God?

Write a prayer that your little one might be set apart to the Lord. Ask that he would grow in holiness and pattern his life after Jesus.



Some people use simple prayers like "Have mercy on me!" to help them calm their minds. They breathe in while saying, "Lord, Jesus Christ, my Savior," and breathe out while saying, "Have mercy on me a sinner." Many of the Bible's prayers could be broken up in this way. Take a few minutes to write down some of these breath prayers, using your favorite scriptures. If you need a little help, look up passages like Psalm 46:10, Psalm 23, and Romans 8:38–39.

Write a prayer for your child to one day understand the mercy of God and to be merciful like our Father in heaven.



Your baby needs to know that while you will need to have rules and discipline as she grows, your love is steadfast and unconditional. Write a prayer for God's strength to help you remain steadfast in your love.

What lullabies do you like to sing to your little one? Or can you remember any special songs often sung to you or your siblings when you were younger?



What have you had to wait for in your life? How has God shown you His mercy or purposes even in that waiting or because of that waiting?

What does your little one enjoy looking at these days? Does she have a special fascination for a mobile, enjoy looking at her own hands, or light up at your smile? What holds her gaze?

Monthly Memories and Milestones

When did Baby smile for the first time? Who or what made your little one smile?

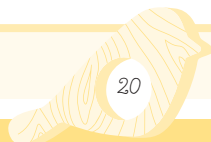
How is Baby growing? Is Baby tall and lean or already getting adorable rolls?



What special holidays have you celebrated since Baby's arrival?
How did you celebrate? Did your little one wear a special outfit?

How is Baby sleeping these days? What helps your little one sleep?

Other moments or milestones from this month:



Your baby has reached the three-month mark! Are you doing anything fun to mark the months? Maybe a picture on a special blanket or chair? What special moments with Baby do you want to remember from recent weeks?

God is omnipresent, and you are not. How does this truth free you from worrying about your limitations as a mother?

Is anything too hard for the Lord? Remember a time in your life or in someone else's life when something seemed humanly too hard, but God still did it.

Dear little one, sometimes you make me laugh when you . . .

What does it mean to you to be reminded that God carries the lambs next to His heart? What comfort does this give you as you think about your baby?

Dear Baby, I hope you never forget . . .

Who in your life embodies many of the qualities of wisdom?
What aspects of this person are worthy of imitation?

Write a prayer for your baby to one day walk in the ways of wisdom.



Monthly Memories and Milestones

Who does Baby get most excited to see?

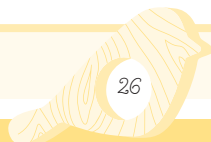
What other special people are in Baby's life right now?

What special seasonal activities has Baby enjoyed?



What were the circumstances surrounding Baby's first laugh?

What other special moments do you want to remember from this month that has passed?



Write a prayer for you and your little one to grow in love for God and others.

About a year ago, you discovered you were pregnant. What was that like? How did you share the news with those dearest to you?

Who shows special affection for your baby? Is there a relative, sibling, or friend from church who is always especially glad to see your infant?

Abundant life—how do you think the world defines this? What is God's view of abundant life?

What comfort is there for us in God's self-sufficiency?

By taking care of your baby's daily needs, you model God's total care for us. While your little one will not remember this time, he is learning to feel safe in that total care. Write to your baby about how you care for him now and the joy you take in that care.



What assurance is there for you as you remember that God is unchanging? How does this attribute give you confidence and peace?

What little glimpses of your baby's personality are you already observing?



Monthly Memories and Milestones

What are some of Baby's favorite toys right now?

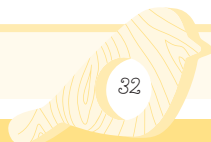
What are some special places you have visited with Baby?



What is Baby's favorite way to get around these days? Car seat, baby carrier, stroller . . . ?

What is Baby's happiest time of day?

Other moments or milestones from this month:



God is passionately committed to you. He longs to be with you. His heart is to see you flourish. Write a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His zealous heart for you.

Does your baby like bath time? What are Baby's favorite and not so favorite parts?

Humility and service go hand in hand. Yet sometimes we serve for the praise of men. The Bible says that when we do this we already have received our reward (Matthew 6:2). Sometimes we serve because we are trying to earn favor with God. (Hint: we can't earn God's favor. That's why we need Jesus.) Write a prayer asking God to give you the right motivation to serve.

Write a prayer for your baby to grow to possess a servant's heart and true humility.

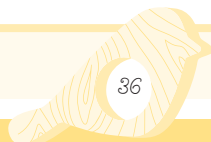


When you think about being the light of Jesus in your home, think about the atmosphere you create by how you love Jesus openly and unashamedly. What specific things do you think God is calling you to do to create a joyful and God-honoring atmosphere in your home?

Speaking of light, what is your daytime routine like these days with your baby?

Where have you experienced a “hard-won” comfort in Christ?
Have you shared that comfort with others?

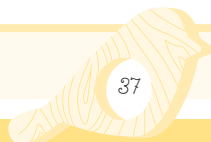
You’ve known your little one for almost half a year; how has
your life changed?



Monthly Memories and Milestones

What new skills has Baby mastered?

Baby really likes it when . . .



One of the biggest world events since Baby was born has been . . .

One thing I had to learn (or relearn) since Baby came was . . .

One thing Baby has already changed in me is:



Write a prayer that your baby will grow into an adult of courage undergirded by the great strength of our warrior God.

Your little one is half a year old! What has been your favorite part of mothering him or her?

Mothers—like every other human on the planet—are going to mess up. What do you think your child will learn from you if you are willing to ask forgiveness when your sins and failures affect him or her? How can these moments become opportunities one day to point your son or daughter to Jesus?

Planes, trains, and automobiles—oh the places your little one will go! Have you taken any major trips yet with Baby, or do you have something planned? What distant places are you excited to share with your son or daughter one day?

How does the definition of gentleness or meekness as strength under control appeal to you? How is it difficult for you?

Strength under control—what a beautiful thing to teach our children! Why do you think it's important to raise kids to understand that true strength is strength submitted to God?

Little one, I want to tell you about how God has been generous with me . . .

What has been your hardest adjustment since Baby's arrival?

Monthly Memories and Milestones

Baby's first foods were . . .

Baby showed what he thought about those first foods by . . .



One thing I often find myself praying for Baby is . . .

How and when did Baby begin to master sitting up?

Other moments or milestones from this month:



How can you cultivate deeper friendships during this new season of life?

Which of your friends has loved on your baby and on you during these months of welcoming your new little one into the world?

What good counsel have you received from a parent or mentor that you would like to pass on to your child?

When you are grown, my dear one, I hope you will remember . . .



Where can you look back and see God's keeping hand in your life? Where have you misjudged His boundaries or limitations in your life when they were lovingly meant for your keeping?

What does babyproofing look like in your house? Is your baby getting into things he shouldn't?

Are you living a connected life with your church community?
Who has God blessed you with through your church?

Write a prayer for your baby to grow up within the blessings
of a vibrant body of believers, enjoying the benefits and
responsibilities of life within a local, God-honoring church.



Monthly Memories and Milestones

I see a lot of resemblance in Baby to . . .

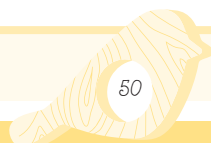
Baby's favorite toys right now are . . .



One special holiday we celebrated recently with Baby was . . .

My favorite thing to do with Baby right now is . . .

Baby's grandparents have enjoyed seeing Baby . . .



What was it like when you held your baby in your arms for the first time?

As mothers, our days are defined by a sacrificial posture toward our families. But when we work with our eyes set on teaching our young ones to love and honor God, how can that infuse our sacrifice with joy?



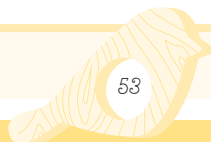
In what ways has God made you a creative person? Tell your little one about it here.

Have you been on any fun or memorable outings with your baby? What places are you excited to take Baby one day?



How can you advance God's goodness today?

Sweet child of mine, I want to tell you of how God in His goodness has intervened in my life.



How is God's justice a comforting truth?

Does your baby have any special playmates, born around the same time, from nursery, playdates, or daycare?

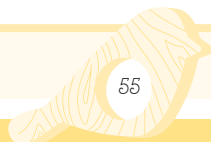


Monthly Memories and Milestones

The biggest change for Baby lately has been . . .

What book do you enjoy reading to Baby? Why do you like reading it to your little one?

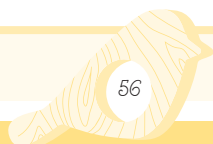
What song do you like to sing to Baby? What makes it special to you, and how does Baby respond?



Baby gets messiest when . . .

What sounds or words is Baby working on these days?

Other moments or milestones from this month:



How do you especially need to reach out to God and experience His care as Father to you today?

Dear one, I want to tell you about a good father I know . . .

A shepherd's job, like a mother's, requires constant attention and vigilance. As you shepherd your baby, how is it comforting to know that God is shepherding you?

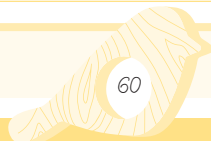
Dear little lamb, your mama has seen you do some silly things. Like a sheep, you sometimes get into trouble and have a hard time getting out of it! Let me tell you about how . . .

Everlasting—what comfort do you take from God’s everlasting nature?

Sweet baby, let me tell you how Mommy and Daddy's love story began . . .

Mothering doesn't leave us much time to take care of ourselves. How does knowing that God values you deeply make you feel secure in a world that puts so much emphasis on physical beauty?

What new skills is your baby mastering these days?



Monthly Memories and Milestones

Baby is moving these days by . . .

Baby likes to say . . .

Baby tried to . . .

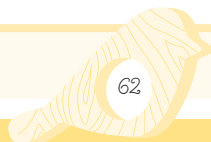
Baby's first home was . . .



In looking at old baby pictures, I think Baby looks most like . . .

Baby's favorite foods these days include . . .

My favorite thing I've gotten to do with Baby recently was . . .

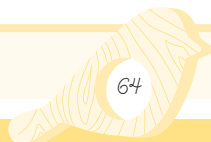


Do you think our culture places much value on the calling of motherhood? How do you see yourself mothering with intentionality in the years to come?

What are you enjoying about Baby these days?

How have you seen God use the challenges of early motherhood to refine you?

Is your baby enjoying any board books or special toys these days?



Passion comes from the root "to suffer" or "to endure." As mothers, our passionate love for our children will lead us to suffer alongside them, to hurt when they hurt, to care deeply for them in all their troubles and heartaches. We can endure with them because Christ endures with us. How does Christ's willingness to suffer alongside you strengthen you to come alongside your child?

How has your baby already taught you something about God or life?

Because we are believers, the Holy Spirit guides us in all truth. How is it comforting to know that you aren't alone as you seek to teach truth to your children?

What skills has your baby been developing lately?

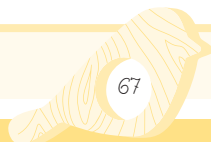


Monthly Memories and Milestones

My favorite thing Baby has outgrown is . . .

Baby's favorite part of this season of the year so far has been . . .

So far Baby has ____ teeth. His favorite things to chomp on with them have been . . .



God is our healer. How is this name for God meaningful to you?

Have you started thinking about how you will celebrate your little one's first year of life? For what are you most grateful?

You are not there yet, but even today, right where you are—on a nursery glider or on a coffee break at the office—close your eyes for a moment and imagine joining the chorus: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Revelation 5:12 ESV). What do you think it will be like on that day to praise our worthy King?

Write a prayer for your baby to grow to be an adult who walks worthy of the gospel.

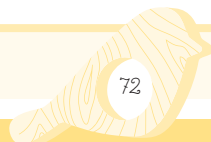


When we know a story ends with “happily ever after,” it helps us relax and enjoy its ups and downs. How can God’s ultimate victory give you peace today?

What "first" has your baby experienced lately? Which "firsts" are you looking forward to most?

We don't have many verses about the childhood of Jesus. But we do have this one from Luke 2:52: "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (NIV). How can this picture of shalom guide you as you pray for your own little one's development? Remember shalom is a multidimensional picture of human flourishing.

Your baby is almost one! What are some of the moments you've cherished most in your first year with Baby?

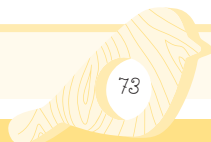


Monthly Memories and Milestones

One unique thing about Baby is . . .

Baby delights us when . . .

One thing I will miss most about this first year with my baby
is . . .



Something I'm excited about as this new chapter with my toddler begins . . .

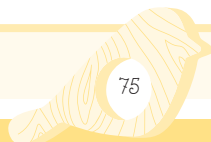
Other moments or milestones from this month . . .



Happy Birthday!

How did you celebrate your little one's first birthday?

Who were the special people who joined in celebrating?



Did your little one receive any special gifts?

Did you have a cake or special food to celebrate?

What was your favorite moment?

